



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	St George's Sunday Market Review
Date:	24 January 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware of a report taken to Committee in April 2010 requesting permission to operate a Sunday Market in St George's Market. Permission was granted by Council in June for a trial of 3 months, commencing July and ending September 2010. An extension of the Sunday Market was granted in October 2010 to be reviewed for permanency in January 2012.

2.	Key Issues
2.1	The market has performed very well and has continued to attract new traders and there is currently a waiting list of over 100 for Sunday trading. It also continues to attract a new customer base. A recent footfall count carried out in November 2011 showed 4167 visitors to the Sunday Market, up from 2139 from same time last year. Over 50% of customers attending St George's stated they would be visiting the city centre after they had finished shopping at the Market.
2.2	More traders are also committing to trading every Sunday, with 127 permanent traders and a slower turnaround of traders leaving; (Sunday has a slower turnaround than the Friday and Saturday Markets in some categories). We also average 20 casual traders turn up each Sunday to try to get a stall. For new traders the Sunday market gives them the opportunity to showcase their products and build up their business. A lot of the traders also rely on Sundays to help sustain their business.
2.3	Stalls allocated each Sunday have been over the required number to cover operational costs with an average weekly income from trader fees of £1700-

	£2000. Estimated income from the Sunday Market to Council is around £90,000 per year.
2.4	The Sunday traders believe a lot of the visitors and customers are now regular faces, with new customers growing weekly. Traders also noted a regular turnout of tourists to the market, estimated at 20% of those who visit the Sunday Market. The traders also state the Sunday Market has not had any effect on the current customers/visitors numbers at the Friday or Saturday Markets, they actually feel it has enhanced the other 2 market days and offers visitors to Belfast something different to do on a Sunday morning. Most of the Sunday traders also feel there has been an increase in their turnover since last year.
2.5	The traders and their representatives are keen to have the Sunday Market as a permanent fixture and feel if it was made permanent then those small number of traders who are still unsure of committing would then commit to trading every week. The uncertainty of the Sunday Market is still making some traders attend other events as well, and that may continue until such times as a decision has been made by Council on the Sunday Market. 97% of traders questioned stated they would commit to trading every Sunday if made permanent.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<u>Financial:</u> Approximately £1700-£2000 per week extra income which should continue to cover all operational costs.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	There are no Equality or Good Relations issues attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to support the Sunday Market in St George's becoming a permanent fixture in the Markets Calendar.

6	Decision Tracking
Subject to Council ratification on 1 February 2012, the decision of the Committee will be implemented by the Markets Development Manager.	
Time Frame: February 2012	Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay